



GOVERNOR'S 2005

# Awards Program



## Ability is Ageless

**Older Worker and  
Exemplary Employer Awards**

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May 17, 2005 - Sacramento - California

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**EDD** Employment  
Development  
Department  
State of California

# From the Governor

*I am pleased to extend warm greetings to all those gathered for the 2005 Governor's Older Worker and Exemplary Employer Awards.*

*Nearly 45 percent of California's workers are age 40 or over, and this trend is only expected to grow. As our population continues to age, older workers will play an increasingly important role in sustaining our economy. This event celebrates the positive contributions that businesses have made to hire and retain older workers, and honors the significance that older workers play in California's workforce.*

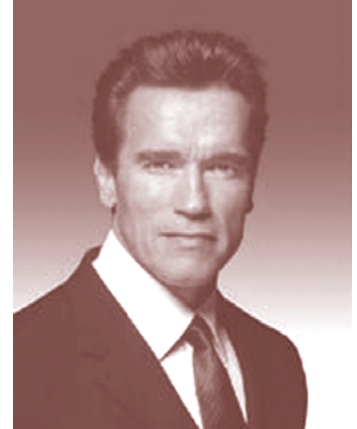
*I commend the older workers and employers who are being honored at this important event today. The future of our state depends on the older workforce. I thank you for your dedication to ensuring that our great state is prepared for the labor needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

*On behalf of all Californians, I offer my best wishes for a great event and every future success.*

*Sincerely,*



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER  
Governor



# From the Director

*As the Director of the Employment Development Department, I congratulate the winners of the Governor's 2005 Older Worker and Exemplary Employer Awards. It is truly a pleasure to celebrate the successes of older workers in the workplace and the employers responsible for making the commitment to a diverse workforce.*

*Today's event is a great opportunity to recognize the significant role of public and private employers on California's growing economy. These employers have addressed the problems of a skilled labor shortage by hiring talented senior workers with successful work experiences. Not only are they good role models for newer workers, but they are also good business representatives to customers and clients. Lastly, I salute the winners for their contributions to help our state be more competitive in a global economy.*

*I hope you will find this event as rewarding as I do.*

*Sincerely,*



PATRICK W. HENNING  
Director



# Luncheon Agenda

## ***Welcome and Introductions***

Loree Levy, Deputy Director  
Public Affairs Branch  
Employment Development Department

## ***Luncheon***

## ***Featured Speaker***

Helen Dennis  
Specialist on aging, employment, and retirement;  
university lecturer; and author

## ***Award Presentations***

## ***Older Worker Awards***

## ***Exemplary Employer Awards***

## ***Excellence in Media and Lifetime Achievement Awards***

## ***Semi-Finalists Recognition***

## ***Conclusion***

Loree Levy

# Host and Featured Speaker



## *Your Host*

**LOREE LEVY** is Deputy Director of the Employment Development Department's (EDD) Public Affairs Branch. She is responsible for the Department's communication, marketing, and education outreach activities. Levy began her career at EDD in 2001 when she was appointed Assistant Director of the Communications Office. Previously, Levy spent 15 years in television news. In the Sacramento area, she was an on-air reporter for NBC-affiliate KCRA-TV Channel 3 and a news anchor for "Good Day Sacramento" at KPWB-TV Channel 31.



## *Featured Speaker*

**HELEN DENNIS** is a nationally recognized specialist on issues of aging, employment, and retirement. She is a lecturer for over 20 years at the Andrus Gerontology Center, University of Southern California, teaching courses on retirement planning, aging, and business.

In her consulting practice, Dennis has worked with approximately 10,000 employees planning for the nonfinancial aspects of their retirement. Her experience includes working with senior executives, mid-level corporate employees, factory workers, and university faculty and staff. She has served as an expert witness on class-action suits involving age discrimination.

Dennis is the editor of two books, *Retirement Preparation* and *Fourteen Steps in Managing an Aging Work Force*. She is past president of two nonprofit organizations, The International Society of Retirement Planners and Career Encores. She is the recipient of the Distinguished Teaching Award from the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education, the Excellence in Teaching Award from the Andrus Associates at the University of Southern California, and the Francis Townsend Award in Gerontology from California State University, Long Beach.

Dennis also writes a weekly column for *The Daily Breeze* (a Copley newspaper), on the topic of "Successful Aging."

# About the Awards

Held each year in conjunction with Older Workers Month in May, the Governor's Older Worker and Exemplary Employer Awards honor older workers who excel beyond their normal duties and employers who demonstrate best practices in hiring and retaining older workers.

The awards began in 1994 to increase public awareness of the important contribution older workers make to California's economy. They were also designed to recognize innovative employers who provide older workers with job opportunities, training, and career advancement. The Senior Worker Advocate Council chooses the semi-finalists from nominations submitted by large and small organizations throughout California. The semi-finalist list is sent to the Governor for final selection.

The awards are supported by private and public organizations including the Employment Development Department, Senior Worker Advocate Council, California Department of Aging, the AARP, the California Chamber of Commerce, the California Employer Advisory Council, the Forum on Older Workers, and the Sacramento Employer Advisory Council.

## ***Older Worker Award***

An exemplary older worker is at least 40 years old and demonstrates excellence and/or leadership on the job involving quality work, coworker relationships, productivity, dependability, and personal excellence that far exceeds normal job expectations. This year's awards include:

- ◆ PRIVATE NONPROFIT BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION
- ◆ PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION
- ◆ PUBLIC SECTOR AGENCY/ORGANIZATION

## ***Exemplary Employer Award***

Exemplary employers consistently demonstrate support for older workers in their hiring and promotion policies, retention efforts, training programs, and benefits packages. This year's awards include:

- ◆ SMALL BUSINESS
- ◆ SMALL, NONPROFIT AGENCY
- ◆ LARGE BUSINESS
- ◆ LARGE NONPROFIT AGENCY

## ***Lifetime Achievement Award***

Given to individuals who have demonstrated a unique and exemplary commitment to their work and the community.

## ***Excellence in Media Award***

Given to media organizations that demonstrate a commitment to raising public awareness of the positive qualities of older workers.



# Older Worker Awards

## *Private Nonprofit Business/Organization*



**RUTH STEFFENSEN**, 75, works in the PASSAGES Adult Resource Center, a special program of the California State University, Chico Research Foundation. As a supervisor in both the Ombudsman and MoneyHelp programs, she is responsible for nearly 30 staff and volunteers. Because of her years of expertise in elder abuse and financial issues, she is considered a valuable resource for her volunteers, coworkers, and others in the aging services network. Her enthusiasm and passion for her job are an inspiration to all who know her. She takes initiative by seeking out training to better herself or by making improvements in the workplace. She is never late, keeps her appointments, and is productive all the time she is at work.

*"She is a tireless advocate for the residents of our long-term care facilities, but never seeks praise for herself for what she has accomplished. She exudes energy, and maintains a schedule that leaves younger staff and volunteers behind."* – David Beveridge, Coordinator, Ombudsman and Elder Abuse Prevention Programs



## *Private For-Profit Business/Organization*

**SHARON KAY SPANGLER**, 65, works as a Senior Accountant for Danco Companies, a commercial refrigeration/HVAC company. Her coworkers, who affectionately call her "Mom," report that she brings life into the office, works very hard, creates an atmosphere of teamwork, and is compassionate towards others. Spangler rarely misses work and comes into the office on weekends to ensure that her accounts are in order. In her 27 years with the company, the quality of her work has remained consistently excellent. She has maintained impeccable accounting records for a business that has not only moved three times in six years, but has quadrupled in sales and service over the same period of time. Her compassion is seen outside of the workplace, where she has dedicated her life to helping people in charitable work for more than 40 years.

*"Everyone who knows Sharon is changed by her beautiful heart and her beautiful spirit to be the best they can be."* – Joyce Millwee, Danco Companies

*"She is such a hard worker, and she never fails in getting the job done. Sharon has the toughest job at the company, and honestly, nobody could handle the job better than her. I hope that I have as much energy and compassion as her when I reach her age."* – Rebecca Johnson, Danco Companies

# Older Worker Awards

## ***Public Sector Agency/Organization***

**GARY E. MURTON**, 58, works for the Sierra Conservation Center, California Department of Corrections, as a Pharmacist II. He fills prescriptions for the growing and aging inmate population at the Center and has made many valuable contributions there during his 14-year tenure. Murton, who is also an expert in computers, created a database for laboratory tracking, a comprehensive tracking system for inmate medical care, a dispensing system that reduced the nurse workload by about 40 percent, and a customized labeling system that decreased the medical record workload by 40 hours a week. In addition to being an excellent pharmacist, he is resourceful, dependable, and goes the extra mile by helping in areas that are not his responsibility. Through his computer skills, he saved the Center an incalculable amount of money due to increased efficiencies and decreased overtime – all the while managing a sometimes stressful and difficult workload.



*"He is never too busy to answer a question or assist with a problem. He is dependable and honest, and his integrity is beyond reproach."* – Mark Chaffee, Senior Medical Technical Assistant, Sierra Conservation Center



# Exemplary Employer Awards

## Poms & Associates

*Insurance Brokers, Inc.*

### **Small Business**

**POMS & ASSOCIATES INSURANCE BROKERS, INC.** has served the Calabasas community for 12 years. More than 50 percent of its workforce and the entire management team are over the age of 40. Because of the company's philosophy that family comes first, older workers are allowed time-off for volunteer activities or to attend the activities of their grandchildren. Having four generations in the workforce, the company recognizes that these differences are what makes the company so unique. The younger employees bring "fun" and camaraderie into the workplace by organizing activities like softball teams and walking clubs, and the older workers mentor the younger workers by training, coaching, and serving as role models.

*"It is such fun for me as the HR Director to watch the interaction, and to explain the differences in work ethic and philosophies to each group so they better understand one another."* – Sharon K. Stull, J.D., PHR, Human Resources Director, Poms & Associates Insurance Brokers, Inc.



### **Small Nonprofit Agency**

**ST. BARNABAS SENIOR SERVICES**, a nonprofit agency, provides social, medical, and recreational services to seniors living in Los Angeles. More than 70 percent of St. Barnabas' employees are over the age of 40. St. Barnabas Senior Services believes that, as an organization serving seniors, its greatest assets are its older workers and their ethnic diversity. The average client is in his or her mid-70s, lives alone, depends on Social Security, and has few relatives or friends to call on for assistance. St. Barnabas' older worker workforce is able to develop a peer rapport, have a good understanding of issues, and to skillfully assist in finding solutions.

*"We hold our older workers in great esteem because of their experience and their abilities to work with and help the elders we serve."* – Martha Spinks, Executive Director, St. Barnabas Senior Services

# Exemplary Employer Awards



## ***Large For-Profit Business***

**QUALCOMM**, a leader in wireless technology, has served the San Diego community for 19 years, employing 7,785 worldwide. More than 37 percent of their workforce is over the age of 40. QUALCOMM offers programs to its workers including flexible work arrangements, tuition reimbursement, a company learning center, a life event management service, senior mentoring, and on-site fitness centers that enable employees to pursue healthy lifestyles – especially in their older years. Their phased retirement plan allows an employee to phase down their work life and transition into their retirement by gradually decreasing the number of hours worked per week until the employee reaches his or her retirement date. For the past three years, the company has been recognized by *Training Magazine* as one of the “Training Top 100” in the nation. QUALCOMM has earned many distinguished awards including *Fortune’s* “100 Best Companies to Work for in America” and AARP’s “Best Employers for Workers Over 50.”

*“Older workers are especially committed to doing quality work, are loyal to the company, have consistent solid performance, and get along well with others. Older workers also bring valuable knowledge and experience to our workplace.” – Gail Gilla, Employee Relations Specialist, QUALCOMM*



## ***Large Nonprofit Agency***

**SCAN® HEALTH PLAN**, a health maintenance organization, has served the Long Beach community for 28 years, employing 766 workers. More than 34 percent of their workforce is over the age of 40. SCAN® provides comprehensive medical care, specialized services, and personal care services such as transportation, meals, and caregiver relief to seniors. SCAN’s® workforce is often personally sensitive to the issues and needs of the seniors they serve as many of their employees are currently facing the issues of aging or the aging of their parents first-hand. SCAN® actively recruits older workers and offers a variety of flexible programs including nonstandard work weeks, tuition reimbursement, on-site training, and competitive benefits. This heightened awareness and sensitivity has led to favorable member satisfaction, increased sales, and lower-than-average turnover rates.

*“The older worker at SCAN® Health Plan is our most significant asset. Our product is geared to a senior population. Who better to mentor our younger workers and sell our product than our older workforce?” – Teresa Kaliski, Human Resources Representative, SCAN® Health Plan*

# Lifetime Achievement Award



**THEODORE LEUNG**, 86, is a Program Aide for the Senior Nutrition Services Program, County of Sacramento. Leung has been a Meals on Wheels driver for more than 30 years, serving meals to some of Sacramento County's most frail, homebound seniors. The program makes it possible for seniors to stay in their homes and communities, and to help preserve their dignity and independence. Leung not only serves up hot meals, but he provides daily contact to seniors who may be feeling lonely. During his visit, he carefully observes changes in the senior's appearance, mental status, or home environment. Leung is one of the most reliable employees the program has ever hired. He is dependable, honest, and has a good sense of humor. At his age, most people would retire, but he finds his life has more meaning with his involvement in the program. He likes the physical activity required for the job; he climbs stairs instead of using the elevator – even at high rise apartments where he delivers to the 12<sup>th</sup> floor.

*"There are people in our lives who have more impact than others. Ted is one of those people for me."* – Barbara Estrada, Public Health Nutrition Consultant II, Department of Aging

# Excellence in Media Award

**CBS NEWS "THE EARLY SHOW,"** aired a segment on "Postponing Retirement" in January 2004, in which CBS correspondent Julie Chen interviewed AARP Manager of Security and Work Deborah Russell. During the interview, Russell discussed why more Americans are choosing to work past the traditional retirement age of 65, and what this means for older employees and employers who hire them. This segment helped raise public awareness of the positive qualities of older workers to millions of viewers from businesses to educational organizations. The interview can be downloaded at [CBSNEWS.com](http://CBSNEWS.com), giving the message wider access to employers, policy makers, educators, workforce development professionals, and older workers – more than a year after it originally aired.



*"Sixty-eight percent of workers currently between the ages of 50 and 70 plan to work in retirement or to never retire. Almost half of these people say that they plan to work into their 70s." – AARP*

# Semi-Finalists

## *Exemplary Employer*

### ◆ **SEQUOIA SENIOR SOLUTIONS** – *Small Business*

Sequoia Senior Solutions serves the Petaluma community, providing dependable and affordable in-home care to elderly clients and their families. The company has 69 employees, of which 57 are over the age of 40. This company is successful because their older employees understand senior issues and provide sensitive and quality care. By providing flexible schedules, superior orientation and training programs, mentoring and coaching opportunities, and recognition programs, the company consistently demonstrates that it values its workers.

## *Older Workers*

### ◆ **REBECCA COEFIELD** – *Private Nonprofit Business/Organization*

Coefield, 56, is the supervisor of the Independent Living Power™ Department of SCAN® Health Plan of Long Beach. This program provides services to seniors who need assistance with various aspects of daily living in order to remain independent in their own homes. Coefield supervises four employees who support over 200 staff serving 17,500 seniors. Coefield regularly volunteers to organize various events to assist seniors throughout the year. Her leadership, creativity, communication style, work ethic, and commitment to customer service contribute to the high regard for her skills by SCAN® Health Plan and its 700-plus employees.

### ◆ **ALBERT S. BENEZRA** – *Private For-Profit Business/Organization*

Benezra, 81, works as an Appliance Sales Associate for Home Depot in San Leandro. Described as “an exceptional communicator and an outstanding producer,” Benezra is credited with 65 percent of the sales in the kitchen and bath department. Benezra has worked since he was 13 years old until the age of 71 when he retired. He began his second career at the age of 80 and has career goals for advancement at a higher level of customer service.

### ◆ **MICHAEL E. LAWSON** – *Public Sector Agency/Organization*

Lawson, 61, is a supervisor of Correctional Education Programs for the Sierra Conservation Center of the California Department of Corrections. Since his arrival in 1991, Lawson expanded the floundering education programs and transformed them into a multi-faceted program that is beneficial to inmate education. Lawson is creative, energetic, and respected for his dedication to the highest ideals of correctional education.

## *Excellence in Media*

### ◆ **HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW** – *“It’s Time to Retire Retirement”*

Harvard Business Review, in its March 2004 issue, featured an article, “It’s Time to Retire Retirement.” Written by Ken Dychtwald, Tamara Erickson, and Bob Morison, the article addresses the aging workforce and the predicted skilled labor shortage. It discusses the importance of the older worker to the American economy and recommends flexible approaches to retirement to address the shortage.

# Senior Worker Advocate Council

The Senior Worker Advocate Council is comprised of volunteer members representing business, labor, senior advocacy groups, veterans, and government. The Council advises the Employment Development Department on issues relating to employment of older workers. The Council promotes coordination and cooperation among state and public agencies and organizations that provide employment information, recruitment, training, and placement services for senior workers.



**KIMBERLY B. MARTINSON**  
Council Chairperson

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## *Senior Worker Advocate Council*

- ◆ **KIMBERLY B. MARTINSON** – Executive Director, Transportation Management Association of San Francisco; Member, Society for Human Resource Management
- ◆ **JACQUI ANTEE** – Member, AARP
- ◆ **HELEN WINCHESTER** – Member, California Employer Advisory Council
- ◆ **JOHNNA MEYER** – Policy Manager, California Department of Aging
- ◆ **MARJORIE MURRAY** – Member, Congress of California Seniors
- ◆ **PHILLIP M. KURZNER, M.D.** – Chief of Services, Department of Urology, West Los Angeles Kaiser Foundation Hospital



# Sponsors

*Thank you to our sponsors for their generous support of the  
2005 Governor's Older Worker and Exemplary Employer Awards Luncheon.  
Their commitment makes this awards luncheon possible.*

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**AARP**

*California Chamber of Commerce*

*California Department of Aging*

*California Employer Advisory Council*

*Employment Development Department*

*Forum on Older Workers*

*Sacramento Employer Advisory Council*

*Senior Worker Advocate Council*

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**California** has more people age 50 and over than any other state in the nation. Data from the California Department of Finance shows that 21 percent of California's workforce is 50 and over. California's primary working age population has traditionally been viewed as, 20 to 54 years of age. Because the smaller generation of 20 to 34 age group born after the Baby Boom, the primary working age population will shrink as a share of the state population by three percent by the year 2010 and six percent by the year 2020. This is a national trend. Between now and 2020, the number of workers age 55 and over will increase by about 80 percent in the U.S.



**STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

**LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

**EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**